



## **Athlete Profile (National)**

### **William Fry – Anxious to Get Started!**

From his home in Beaver Creek, Ohio, William Fry has no time to be idle. He's too busy coaching youth soccer and keeping fit. A combat veteran who served in Iraq, Fry, 43, retired from the Air Force in 2006 after 21 years of service. While he knew he would someday leave the military, he never guessed it would be due to a disabling neurological disease. Fry has multiple sclerosis.

"When you focus on sports, there isn't time to sulk," Fry said. "You are too busy trying to increase your accuracy or decrease your time. So you have a disability – get over it and get on with your life!"

Fry, who served in combat in Operation Iraqi Freedom, has been active in sports throughout his life. "Sports are a great tension reliever," he says. He wrestled in high school and, as an adult, participated on softball and volleyball recreational teams as well as in bowling leagues.

"I had the opportunity to participate in the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic in April, and the folks there encouraged me to also participate in the Wheelchair Games," he said. After attending the winter sports event, Fry said, "I wish I would have found out about these events earlier so I could have been enjoying the therapeutic benefits sooner!" He enjoys competing, but he especially likes the national veterans events. He describes them like this, "It is competition but it's not cutthroat – and you have fun relating to your fellow competitors."

As a novice (first time) athlete in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games this year, Fry will compete as a Class IV, typically the category for athletes who are paraplegic and have lower level spinal cord injuries. At the Games, he is signed up for the air guns competition and three field events, including shot-put, discus and javelin. He is looking forward to visiting a new place, meeting new people, experiencing the frequently cited camaraderie of the National Veterans Wheelchair Games and having fun with his fellow veterans. "I want to do the best I can and not let my teammates down," he says. "I'm anxious to get started!"